

§ II.

SO plain a proof of forgery have we here, in this slight circumstance. Not addressed externally to Bothwell, not addressed internally to him, the letters were yet *known* by Murray to be intended for him. And the same kind of intuitive knowledge is observable in another circumstance, in the DATES of the letters.

Not one of the letters has a date of the year upon it. Not one of them has a date of the month. Only one has the date of the day and place. This is the second. It carries these words at the bottom of it: "From Glasgow this Setter-day in the morning."* This is all the internal evidence that we have, concerning the times and the places, at which these remarkable letters pretended to be written. And the very omission of these natural and continual adjuncts of a letter, throws a strong colouring of suspectability over the whole. But, though *we* know no more than this, *Murray* knew a great deal more. He could tell exactly, *when* each of the letters was composed by Mary. He could point out with a ready finger, *where* each of them was dispatched to Bothwell. How shall we account for this high degree of knowledge? It is certainly wonderful. It has even something supernatural in its appearance. But *was* he possessed of any portion of that second-sight, which is so peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland? Had he the hap-

* See it in vol. 2d.

pineness to see THE SUN OF DRUIDISM, shining out in a bright gleam of vision from the tops of the northern mountains, when it had been long set to the rest of the island? Or, in that more popular mythology, to which Murray and his brothers of presbyterianism must have been peculiarly attached, has he gone on so far in profligacy, as to be admitted into a compact of blood with the spirits of the deep; to have some of them attending constantly upon him for his allotted hour, and to receive intelligence of the greatest secrets from them? He *may* have gone on in flagitiousness long enough, I fear, to be qualified for admission into such a compact. But he had no service for his *familiars* now. He *may* have been blessed with that only blessing of the poor Highlanders at present, the gift of second-sight. But he made no use of it concerning the letters. His knowledge with regard to *them*, was all natural.

When first the artificer of forgery began to exercise his pen in the invention of the letters, he would as certainly DATE them, as direct and subscribe them. He had even a journal drawn up for the very purpose of dating them. This was to fix the time, and to ascertain the place, for each of the letters respectively. And the artist appears to have actually annexed the requisite notes of both, from it. This journal was presented by Murray to the commissioners at Westminster, when he presented the letters. It was the scale, by which these were graduated. Yet no mention is made of it as delivered in by the

rebels, either by themselves or by the commissioners. It was plainly presented, however. It was found among the other papers in the Cotton library, and had been marked by the hand of Cecil himself.*

In this useful key of chronology to the letters, which has been since enlarged to refer back to those letters that it was originally created to form, Murray tells us; that the *first* was written from Glasgow, as well as the second; that the *third* and *fourth* were equally written from thence, with both; and that they were all written on the 24th, 25th, or 26th of January 1567. This is certainly very extraordinary intelligence. But let us see the journal itself. It speaks thus. "January
 "21, 1566," 1566-7. "The Quene tuik hir
 "journey towards Glascow, and was accompa-
 "nyit with the Erlis of Huntly and Bothwell to
 "the Kalendar, my Lord Levistoun's place. 23.
 "The Quene came to Glascow, and on the rode
 "met hir Thomas Crauford from the Erle of
 "Lennux, and Sir James Hamilton, with the
 "rest mentionit IN HIR LETTER.—24. The
 "Quene remaynit at Glascow, lyek as she did
 "the 25th and the 26th, and hayd the confer-
 "ence with the King WHEREOF SHE WRYTTIS;
 "and IN THIS TYME wrayt hir BYLLE," the first
 letter, "and UTHER LETTERIS to Bothwell."†
 Here we have every circumstance concerning
 the four first letters, detailed to us with the
 greatest exactness. *The very writer of the letters*

* Appendix, No. x.

† Ibid. *ibid.*

could not have known the history of them, more completely. But the apparent *infallibility* of our guide does not desert him here. He can tell us with an equal minuteness of assurance, concerning the four other letters. He is even *more* particular. He now tells us the very day of the week. "April 21. viz. Mounday," he says, "the Quene "raid to STIRLING, as it wes devyfit, and FROM "THENCE WREYT THE LETTERIS concerning the "purpose devyfit of hir ravishing; quhair Huntly "cam to hir, and began to repent him.—April "23. She came to Linlythquow—."* This is also very particular. And indeed the whole reflects such an extraordinary lustre upon the letters, that a reader is astonished at the first view with the broad glare of light around him; and cannot immediately recollect his scattered senses, to consider the artificial nature of it.

Murray was concerned in the fabrication of the letters. He might well therefore know so precisely as he does, all the circumstances relating to them. But the dates he knew to be upon the very letters themselves. The journal plainly refers to those dates by its manner. It does not say, that Mary wrote the *four first* letters from Glasgow; as we are obliged to say for the sake of distinction. *We* fix the number, from a view of their contents. But the journal refers only to their dates. It therefore says, that "in this "tyme [she] wrayt hir bylle," meaning her first letter, and alluding to her own appellation of it

* Appendix, No. x.

in the very letter itself, "and [hir] uther letteris "to Bothwell," not recounting them, but remitting the reader to their dates. And the letters still preserved those dates, to the conference at York. This is *plainly* true concerning *one* of them, and must therefore be true concerning *all*. The first letter is peculiarly noticed by the commissioners there, as indeed it deserved to be. This has *now* not a single trace of a date upon it. Nor had it any at Westminster, as is clear from a slight intimation concerning it from the commissioners there. "Thomas Crawford," they notice, "was, as they," the rebels, "said, the "same party of whom mention is made in a long "lettre—, where it is said, about the beginning "of the same lettre, that a gentleman of the "Earl of Lenox met *the party that wrote the lettre*," the Queen being so mentioned, because there was no subscription to it, "about four "miles from the *place where the lettre was written*," the place being so denoted, because there was no local date to the letter, "as in the copie "of the same lettre may appere."* Yet the journal above asserts it expressly to be written from GLASGOW. And from GLASGOW the commissioners at York equally assert it to be written. "Imprimis," they say in their extracts from it, "after lang discourse of hir conference with the "king hir husband in GLASGOW, sche wreibis to "the said Erle in thir [these] termes,"† &c. But in what they call "a brief note of the chief and

* Goodall, ii. 246.

† No. vii.

"principal

“ principall pointis of the Quene of Scottes lettres
 “ written to Bothaill—, as farre forthe as we
 “ coulde BY THE READINGE gather,”* they say
 thus: “ She toke her journey from Edenbурge
 “ to GLASCO, to visit,” &c. Then “ she wrote
 “ to Bothaill from GLASCO, how she flattered,”
 &c.† They then form a large abstract of, and
 make large extracts from, the very *first* letter.
 And they plainly appear from the easy manner
 in which they mention the place, as well as from
 their own assertion concerning the reading, to
 have collected the date from the letter itself.

In this state then, the letters remained to the
 conference at York, ALL DATED, half from Glas-
 gow, half from Stirling, the former on the 24—
 26th of January 1567, and the latter on the 21st—
 22d of April following. But they were all, except
 one, stript of this garniture before the conference
 at Westminster. This is clear from a cotempo-
 rary memorial, which was written without any
 inspection of the letters, but was founded on
 good intelligence concerning them, and was even
 presented to Elizabeth herself on the 17th of De-
 cember 1568. “ They are not,” says the au-
 thor, “ subscrivit be the alledgit writer thair of,
 “ nor seilit nor signetit, and [except one] CON-
 “ TAIN NA DAIT OF ZEIR, MONETH, OR DAY, NOR
 “ zit direct to na man.”‡ This is also plain
 from

* Appendix, No. vi.

† Ibid. *ibid.*

‡ Appendix, No. xii. This remarkable memorial appears
 again in an abstract, which Cecil made of it at the time, and
 the title of which is, “ extracted out of a writing given
 “ to

from the cotemporary memoirs of Crawford, which notice the rebels to have produced at Westminster, "some articles merely conjectural, decrees made in a tumultuous assembly of the estates, and some love-letters—without mentioning TIME OR PLACE."* It is equally plain from the annals of the cotemporary Camden, in which he tells us, that "the letters—wanted NAMES, SUBSCRIPTIONS, and DATES" to them.† They thus became at last the most monstrous letters, that ever the credulity or the knavery of man obtruded upon the world for evidence. And thus the letters, in the months of October and November, 1568, underwent another important alteration; and appeared in a FOURTH EDITION, corrected and abbreviated, on the 8th of December following.

When the rebels originally formed their letters and their journal, they had a good deal of past time to re-trace on their memories. By their own account, the letters were not in their hands

"to the Queen's majesty, by the bishop of Ross, 18 December, 1568." That part of the abstract, which relates to this often-cited passage, runs exactly in these terms: "Her hand, nor seal, nor date is to the letters, nor no direction is to any" (Burleigh's Papers, 581, Guthry's H. of E. iii. 318). The Bishop also has repeated all again, in his Defence of Queen Marie's Honour. "There is neither subscription of the writer," he says, "nor superscription unto whom they were directed: they are neither sealed nor signed; there appeareth neither date, wherein they were dated, neither day nor moneth" (P. 18—19, Anderson 1).

* P. 114.

† Transf. 117, Orig. 145.

before the 20th of June, and in reality were not before the 4th of December, 1567. Yet these go back in their dates, as we have already seen, to the April and the January preceding. The journal even goes back to the very June before all.* Nor was any part of it kept at the time. This is apparent from the early mention of the letters in it. It is also apparent from two strokes in the language of it. The son of Mary was not crowned King, and the Earl of Murray was not made Regent, as it witnesses itself, before July 29, and Aug. 22, 1567.† Yet so long as April the 9th and March the 10th before, and even so long as the 19th of June in the year preceding, from the mere force of habit, and by an unperceived anticipation of the language then current at the writing, the one is denominated King and the other Regent. The very first article of the whole informs us, that “June 19. KING “JAMES THE SIXT was born.” Two other articles tell us, that “March 10.—at this tyme “my Lord REGENT purchaift leif to depart;”‡ and “April 9. my Lord REGENT departit furth “of Scotland.”§ So plainly was the journal drawn up from end to end, by a recollection of dates and facts. So plainly also were the letters, that are mentioned in and were dated by it, not written till James was crowned and Murray became regent; till the one had been king, and the other regent, for some time; and till the constructor of the journal, and the dater of the letters, was imper-

* Appendix, No. x.

† Ibid. *ibid.*

‡ Ibid. *ibid.*

§ Ibid. *ibid.*

ceptibly led by the established habits of conversation, to call them king and regent some months before they were. And so clearly is the origin, which I have assigned to the letters from a long train of historical evidences before, here shewn at once by three accidental dashes, in the very language of the rebel journal. The journal and the letters were both drawn up together, in the end of November and beginning of December, 1567, and three or four months after James was crowned and Murray was made regent.

The journal was naturally, at first, a mere outline of facts and dates. But it was afterwards filled up, with large references to the letters. This however was not done, *till the conferences in England*. The language of the journal again proves the point, and in two additional strokes of its narration. On the 12th of February, 1567, it says, "Harry Killigrew arrayvit from *the Quene's Majestie*." On the 15th of May, 1568, it adds, "Maister Middlemoir, sent from *the Quene's Majestie*, causit my lord from thencefurth absteyn from armour and violence." Here *Elizabeth*, we see, is spoken of simply as "the Quene's Majestie," without any addition to restrict the title to England, and without any specification to distinguish her from the Queen of Scotland. And, as this easy and familiar mode of expression could never have been used in *Scotland*; so does the purely English quality of it, prove the journal to have been finally interpolated and extended in *England*. The
rebels

rebels formed it at first for their private use, in fabricating the letters, and in modelling their other forgeries. It was to be their grand time-keeper, in realizing all the freaks of forgery, which they actually carried into execution, and all that they had probably pictured upon their imagination besides,

[All the ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.]

And they enlarged it at the beginning, they extended it at the end, and they interpolated it in the middle; for the exhibition of it to the commissioners at Westminster, for the fortifying of the letters by it, and for the prosecution of the abusive work in the letters against Mary.

But, from this late formation of it at first, the rebels might well become, as they clearly did, apprehensive that the dates in it were erroneous, after the conference at York. A violent clash with chronology, would expose them to the most imminent danger of detection. On their publick production of the letters at Westminster, the memories of many would be ransacked, notes would be consulted, and records might be appealed to, to see whether the dates would not lead to a detection. They could no longer terrify, as they had done in Scotland. Their confidence in Elizabeth indeed was great. But anachronisms would be too vulnerable a part, to be left in any state of exposure. Yet what could they do? They could not rectify the dates with a *certain* hand, probably. They only suspected them to be false. But, at their distance from Scotland, they could not determine absolutely,

absolutely, what were false or what were true. They had only one resource, therefore. This they made use of. THEY TORE OFF ALL THE DATES AT ONCE, except one. With *this* they left no note of the year or of the month. And in that new state they presented them, to the commissioners at Westminster.

But why did they leave a date to the second letter, when they took it away from the rest? For this reason, I believe. The original date of the second was accidentally what it now is, vague and loose; without any note of the month or year, without any intimation of the day of the month, and with only a mention of the day of the week, the time of the day, and the name of the place. Such a date was so indeterminate, that no mischief would be apprehended from it. It was therefore left. The harmless generality of it gained it a continuance, when the particularity of the others made them too dangerous to be kept.

But such is the ever-hazardous nature of guilt, that the rebels betrayed their forgery in every step which they took to hide it. They put dates to their letters at first, in order to authenticate them. They were obliged to snatch them hastily away afterwards, in order to prevent a detection. They thus made a detection, by the very variation which they occasioned in the form of the letters. And, what shews the great difficulty of giving a firm consistency to falsehood, they could after all mention exactly the times and the places, at which each of the letters had been

been written; and so detected themselves again, by the impossibility of coming to the knowledge of such circumstances, in an honest manner. *

§ III.

I HAVE now gone through a variety of alterations, which were made from time to time in the form and substance of the evidences against Mary. But I can add one more to the list, which is even more apparent than they, and perhaps more important too. And it is this. Those evidences were not merely varying in their substance or form. They were also changing in

* The reader, who is acquainted with the controversy already carried on upon the subject of these letters, will readily see, that I have carefully refrained from the grand point, which has been canvassed so much by Mr. Goodall, i. 118—124, Mr. Hume, v. 148—149, and Dr. Robertson, Diss. 35—40, concerning the date of the second letter being in direct contradiction to dates authenticated by records. I must be candid enough to acknowledge, that I once intended to enter fully into it, though it was not essential to my argument; that I coincided entirely with Mr. Goodall against Mr. Hume; and that I hoped, with the useful sanguineness of a meditating author, to have confirmed the argument of the former for ever. I had not then read Dr. Robertson's Dissertation. But, on reading it, I was surprised, I was staggered, I was converted. It seems very strange indeed, that records signed every day, or every other day, successively for weeks together, should yet carry *anticipated* dates upon them; and that even the *place* should be anticipated as well as the day. Yet so it is. Dr. Robertson has shewn it to be so. And I think myself compelled by the laws of honour, to pay this acknowledgment of justice, not silently but openly, in favour of a dissertation, which I am obliged in almost every other respect to reprobate.

their

their very NUMBER. This is indeed an amazing circumstance. Yet it is a very clear one.

The writings are reported by the rebels themselves, to have been all found together, at one time, and in one place. Thus, in the journal which we have noticed so particularly before, it is said: 1567. "June 20. Dalglesche, chalmers child [chamberlain] to my Lord Bothwell, wes takin, and the box and letteris which he brought out of the castell."* And in Murray's and Morton's receipts, the 16th of September, 1568, and the 22d of January, 1571, it is said that this "box, and haill pecis within the samyn, were takin and fund with umquhile George Dalglesche, servand to the said Erll Bothvile, upon the xx. day of Junii, the zeir of God 1567 zeirs."† This was Pandora's box to Mary, pregnant with all the evils of life to her. But then the very nature of such a discovery, precludes all possibility of addition to the evidence. It must have been in its fullest magnitude, at the very moment of the discovery. And it could not have been one atom larger, at the final production of the whole in Westminster.

Yet it did enlarge. The LETTERS were all, that the rebels pretended to have at first against her. The act of council mentions only "HIR PREVIE LETTRES," as the argument for the charge of murder against her. The act of parliament equally notices only "HIR PREVIE LETTERIS," as the groundwork for the sentence of

* Appendix, No. x. † Ibid, No. iv.

murder against her. Nothing else but the letters was produced, before either the parliament or the council. And Mary's nobles expressly assert what was presented to the former, to have been merely the "allegit PRIVIE WRITINGIS."* So also, when Murray on the 22d of June 1568 delivered some notices to an agent of Elizabeth's, in order to be reported to Elizabeth herself; he said thus: "We have already sent unto our servant Mr. Jhone Wode, that quhilk we traist shall sufficientlie resolve hir Majestie of any thing, scho standis doubtful unto." But what was this? He tells us himself. It was "sic LETTERIS as we haif of the Quene, our soverane lordis mother, that sufficientlie, in our opinioun, preivis hir consenting to the murthure of the king hir lauchful husband."† He has yet nothing more than the letters, to produce against her. And accordingly the journal itself speaks only of "the box and LETTERS," as taken on the 20th of June 1567. So far therefore, as late as the end of the journal, which is May 15, 1568; and even still later, below the 22d of June following; the whole evidence against Mary, by the confession of the rebels themselves, was comprised singly in the letters. FOR ONE WHOLE YEAR they pretended not to find any thing in the box, except letters. Yet, with an astonishing hardness of front, they afterwards altered their

* Goodall, ii. 361.

† Appendix, No. iii.

tone. They pretended to find fresh evidences there. These had lain all the time unperceived. The approaching conference in England made them search the box again. And they now drew forth some valuable additions to their former papers.

They thus found for the first time those SONNETS, which my preface has announced so long ago, and which my reader, I suppose, has been so frequently expecting to appear since. These now appeared at last. The 16th of September 1568 is the day of their exhibition to us, nearly FIFTEEN MONTHS after the first discovery of the box. *Then* the rebels could remember those circumstances relative to the discovery of the box, which they had forgotten before the privy council and parliament the December preceding. They could even remember still more of them above three years afterward, and when the English edition of the Detection was published in November 1771. Thus the fun of memory shone brightest, as it was declining most from its meridian. In the same manner the sonnets were discovered, fifteen months after the discovery of the box. They are *then* mentioned, as a part of its original contents. They are *then* delivered up by the Earl of Morton, who was the pretended seizer of the box, to the Earl of Murray, who was preparing for the conference at York. And they are thus mentioned in the receipt, which the latter with a solemn hypocrisy gave to the former, in acknowledgment of this important deposit. He had received, he says, "ane silver box ower-
" gilt

“gilt [overgilt] with gold, with all missive letteris, — SONETTIS OR LUIF-BALLETTIS, — con-
 “tenit thairin.”* The sonnets were accordingly produced at York. They are thus mentioned by the commissioners there. Murray, they say, produced some letters with “diverse fond
 “BALLADES of hir,” Mary’s, “own hand, which
 “letters, BALLADES, — weare closed in a little
 “coffer of silver and gilte, heretofore geaven by
 “her to Bothwell.”† They were re-produced afterwards with the letters at Westminster, and placed in order before them, though they have been generally printed after them since. “The
 “tenors of all which writings,” says the journal of the commissioners concerning them and the letters, “hereafter follow in order, THE FIRST
 “BEING IN MANNER OF A SONNET.”‡ And they were finally produced with the letters before the privy council, a few days afterwards; being noticed in the journal of the council, as “letters
 “supposed to be written by the Quene of Scots
 “own hand to the Erle Bothwell, and therewith
 “also ONE LONG SONNET.”§

This was certainly a grand addition to the original stock of evidence. Fabricated in the month of September 1568, the sonnets were plainly calculated to co-operate with the letters, in impressing more and more strongly upon the minds of the English commissioners, the idea of Mary’s violence of affection for Bothwell. The rebels

* Appendix, No. iv.

† Ibid. No. viii.

‡ Ibid. No. v.

§ Ibid. No. viii.

accordingly produced them at Westminster, expressly with the view of shewing, in concert with the letters, "her INORDINATE LOVE towards the "said Erle Bothwell."* And this end of their creation they appear to have answered completely. The commissioners at York particularly, who not only relate the facts, but also express their feelings upon them, appear to have been struck with the gross affection, so openly displayed upon the letters and ballads. This they express in strong terms. And "the said letters and ballades," they observe, "do discover such inordinate love "between her and Bothwell, her lothfomeness " [loathing] and abhorringe of her husband that "was murdered, in such sorte, as everie good and "godlie man can not but detest and abhorre the "same."†

Nor were the sonnets *all* the additions, that were *then* made to the original evidence. Men, who have it in their power to recur to forgeries for assistance at every turn, will be sure to recur to them in any pressing moment of distress. They have an ample fund of resources in themselves. They have a treasure that can never be exhausted. And they will be apt to draw upon it with the greatest freedom. Accordingly, at the same distance of fifteen months from the first seizure of the box and letters, and at the same period of time with the first discovery of the sonnets, the rebels found some other papers, lying equally unnoticed at the bottom of this little coffer. These

* Appendix, No. viii.

† Ibid. No. v.

make their first appearance with the sonnets, on the 16th of September 1568. They thus came equally opportune with them for the conference at York, which began the 4th of October following. Murray appears arming himself for the battle there. And, among other his habiliments of war, we find him furnished with the letters, with the sonnets, and with some MARRIAGE-CONTRACTS. These were matrimonial agreements betwixt Mary and Bothwell. One of them is very short. But, like the letters, it pretends to be written wholly with her own hand. And, as the letters too did once, it pretends to be also subscribed by her. In it, Mary promises to take Bothwell for her husband. The other is long. It is a reciprocal engagement. It is therefore signed by both, “and before thir [these] witnesses, George Erle of Huntly, and Maister “Thomas Hepburne, persoun of Aulhamstock, “&c.”* And the rebels averred afterwards, that Huntly was the *writer* of the contract, as well as a witness to it.† Both these now made their appearance FOR THE FIRST TIME. Never noticed in the act of council, never noticed in the act of parliament, they are equally unnoticed by Murray, in his address to Elizabeth through her agent. They are first mentioned in Murray’s receipt for the box and its contents, when he was preparing to set off for York. He then acknowledges to have “all missive letteris, CONTRACTIS “OR OBLIGATIONIS FOR MARIAGE, sonettis

* Appendix, No. xiv.

† Goodall, ii. 92.

“or luif-ballettis,—contentit thairin.”* These contracts were shewed to the commissioners at York, accordingly. They notice both. “There was a contract shewed unto us,” they say, “signed with the Quene’s hand, and also with Bothwell’s, bearing date the 5th of Aprill, writ-ten, as it is said, with the Earl of Huntley’s own hand, who, with one Thomas Hebourne, weare the only witnesses to the same: which contract beareth date before Bothwell’s purgation of the murder.” “There was also,” they add, “a contract shewed unto us, of the Quene’s own hand, of the marriage to be had between her and Bothwell, bearing no date.”† They were equally produced again at Westminster. There the commissioners say, that they received from the rebels “certain lettres and sonnets,—and *other wrytings* also.”‡ Two of these “other writings” we know to have been the contracts; because, among the papers laid afterwards before the privy council, was “a promise of marriage in the name of the said Quene with the Erle Bothwell,” and also “the original writing, supposed to be written by the Erle of Huntley, being a contract of marriage betwixt the Quene and the Erle Bothwell, dated at Seaton the 5th of Aprill, and subscribed by the Quene and the Erle Bothwell.”§ And we equally know both to have been presented, from Murray’s own account of his conduct on that occasion. “We producit,” he says,—“letteris,

* Appendix, No. iv.

† Ibid. No. viii.

‡ Ibid. No. v.

§ Ibid. No. ix.

“—written

“ — written be the Quenis awin hand, and sent
 “ to—James sumtime Erle of Bothville; Item,
 “ a little contract or obligatioun, written be the
 “ said Quenis awin hand, promising to marry the
 “ said Bothville; Item, an uther contract, writ-
 “ ten by the Erle of Huntlie’s hand, of the date
 “ the v. of Aprill 1567.”*

Thus were the contracts framed, together with the sonnets, and long after the letters. They were “ twinned at one birth ” with the former. They were born for one purpose with both. They were to co-operate with both, in carrying on the intimacies of adultery to the highest pitch. They were to ripen them into formal engagements of marriage. And they were thus to hold out the surmised murder to us, as at once the effect of the adultery, and the cause of the contracts. But they were both founded on a real engagement. This was well known. It was a very publick one. It was subscribed by Mary and Bothwell, in the presence of many of her nobles. It was then registered in the books of council and of session. And the original is still preserved in the royal archives of Scotland. This is dated the 14th of May 1567.† *Then* Mary had been seized by Bothwell, carried to his castle of Dunbar, and even RAVISHED by him there. In this situation, she might well enter into a matrimonial engagement with him. Marriage then seemed the only refuge for her honour. Yet, *for that very reason*, the rebels formed two others, the principal and

* Appendix, No. xi.

† Ibid. No. xiv.

the dated one of an *earlier* period; and made George Earl of Huntly, who was one of the witnesses to the former, a witness to, and the very writer of, the present. But the counterfeit could only have passed upon the world, while the genuine was unknown. The moment this was fetched out of its repository in the archives by Mr. Goodall, that was detected. The borrowed lustre of the moon sunk away, before the rising sun.*

As to the smaller and un-dated contract, this is still more plainly a forgery of the rebels. It is expressly averred above by the commissioners at York, to have been "of the Quene's own hand," and by Murray himself to have been "*written* be the said Quenis awin hand;" while the other is asserted to have been "*signed* with the Quene's hand, and also with Bothwell's," but "*written*—with the Earl of Huntley's own hand." We have here therefore a peculiar evidence of forgery. This little contract, from some extraordinary but unknown circumstances in its history, is *the only one of all these attributed writings, that was not published in the Detection of Buchanan*, being first printed by Mr. Goodall in 1754; what is more surprising, is *the only one of all these attributed writings, that was left at London in the original* by the rebels; and, what is more surprising than either, is *the only one of all these attributed writings, that remains in the original at present*. It remains in the Cotton library, Ca-

* See this at full length in Appendix, No. xiv.

ligula, C. i. fol. 202. From that original Mr. Goodall published it. AND THAT IS APPARENTLY NOT WRITTEN BY THE QUEEN'S HAND. This is a full proof of the general forgery. It is a proof addressed to the very senses. The *subscription* of it is in a different hand from the *contract* itself. It is also different from Mary's hand. The letters of it, in general, carry no great resemblance to the writing of Mary. The first letter, in particular, is entirely different. In all the genuine subscriptions of her name, the first letter is constantly of the same length with the rest; while, in the bastard subscription before us, it is *twice* as long as they. And, what crowns the whole, the contract itself, which is asserted by Murray and asserted by the commissioners to have been written with the Queen's own hand, is actually written in one totally different, is actually written in the formal hand of a lawyer, and is actually written in a kind of chancery hand.* So palpably gross is the forgery here!

Yet let me add another remark. When this contract was shewn at York, it was certainly *written* in the *same* hand in which it was *subscribed*. This is plain from the account of it, given equally

* Appendix, No. xiv, and Goodall, i. 126. So also says Ruddiman in his notes upon Buchanan's Hist. xix. 462. "Quem autem hic contractum," he tells us, "a Regina manu scriptum asseverat Buchananus, alia manu ex diversâ literarum formâ et modulo exaratum contendit David Crawfordius, qui eum cum aliis genuinis Reginae scriptis composuit. Vide acta publica ac literas ab ipso collectas in Biblioth. Jurid. Confer etiam appendicem ad Anglicam Detectionis et Actionis in Mariam interpretationem, Pag. 1."

by the commissioners and by Murray. But when it was exhibited to Cecil, and lodged among his papers now in the Cotton library, it was very different. Cecil's contract is written in one hand, and subscribed in another. Cecil's contract *pretends* not to be written in the Queen's hand, though the contract of the commissioners and the contract of Murray does. *That* pretends only to be *subscribed* by Mary, when *this* pretends to be *written* by her. They are therefore not the same. The contract shewn at York, and reported by Murray, has been suppressed. Another has been formed upon another plan, and yet given to Cecil as the same. This demonstrates the forgery again in the fullest manner. And, to mark still more the confusedness of guilt in Murray, he exhibited a contract all written in the Queen's hand at York, he changed it afterwards into a contract only subscribed by her, he presented the latter to Cecil, and still he says he presented the former to him.

But was not the assumption of Lord Huntly's name, as a witness to one of these counterfeits, and even as the very writer of it, a most extraordinary circumstance; *if* the whole was forged? The whole was certainly forged. The actual appearance of the real contract, and the late production of the mimick one; the appearance also of another contract, as all written by Mary's hand, and its re-appearance, as only subscribed by her; concur decisively to prove it a forgery. The use of Huntly's name, therefore, *was* a most extraordinary circumstance. He was then alive. He was then

warm

warm against the rebels. He was full of loyalty and spirit. And would not such a man as this, exult in exposing the impudence of falsehood in the rebels, and glory in blasting their reputation by proclaiming their forgery? He certainly would. Yet he did not. In the beginning of the year 1569, appeared what is called "the protestatioun of the Erlis of Huntly and Argyll, touching the murthour of the King of Scottis." In this, Argyle and Huntly are seen producing some very violent presumptions against Murray and Lethington, of their guiltiness in the murder; and making this very pointed conclusion from the whole, against them: "We judge in our consciences, and haldis for certane and treuth, that the saidis Erle of Murray and Secretarie Lethingtoun wer auctoris, inventaris, devyseris, counfallouris, and causeris of the said murthour, in quhat manner or be quhatsumever personis the samin was execute."* And "was not this also the time," says Mr. Hume, "for Huntly to deny his writing [and witnessing] Mary's contract with Bothwell, if that paper had been a forgery?"† It certainly was the properest of all times. Only we should be certain also, that he actually DREW UP the protestation, and that, when he did it, he actually KNEW of the writing and testimony, thus attributed to him by the rebels. These two circumstances must be ascertained, before we can expect him to deny. Mr. Hume

* Goodall, ii. 320.

† Hist. v. 151,

indeed has taken it for granted, that Huntly knew—because he himself knows. On the same principle, many a spectator in the playhouse is astonished, that the persons moving before him do not act very differently from what they do, by availing themselves of all that insight into characters and incidents, which he himself enjoys. And in fact the Earl of Huntly, *when* he drew up the protestation, was as little apprized of the contract affirmed by the rebels to be written and witnessed by him, as he was of the power of gravitation, or the motion of the fixed stars. He *did not draw up the protestation at all*. It was composed by Lord Boyd and the Bishop of Ross, of whom Lord Boyd had just come to Mary; was immediately sent by her to the Earls Huntly and Argyle, for their seals and subscriptions; and was intercepted on the way, remitted to Cecil, and so lodged among Cecil's papers in the state in which it now appears, un-sealed, un-subscribed, and undated in month, day, or place.*

“Ze sall reffave,” says Mary in a covering dispatch to Huntly of the 5th of January 1569, “one letter be this beirar, to be subscryvit be zou, and our counsigne the Erle of Argyle.” It “is maid be my Lord Boyd’s adwyse,” she adds, “conform to the declaratioun ze maid to our traist [trusty] counfallour the Bishop of Ross, he knawing zour deliberatioun and will thairin-till.” It was therefore drawn up by Lord Boyd from the minutes of

* Goodall, ii. 321. It is but fair to acknowledge, that Dr. Robertson in Diff. 7—9 first taught me to see this fact, in opposition to the friends of Mary.

a conversation, which the earls had reported formally to the bishop; and in consequence of an agreement then made betwixt him and them, that they would authenticate the particulars, and assert their inference from them, whenever it was thought expedient for the honour of Mary. But, as she subjoins, "we refer to your discretiounis "to eik and pair the said letter, as ze shall think "best, and extend it in sic form, as ze shall think "maist necessare, praying you to send us the "samin agane, subscribed and seillit, the soonest ze "may; to the effect it may be producit, togid- "der with the rest of the accusatiounis, quhillk "we intend to give in aganis [against] our tra- "touris."* Mary sent it for their seals and subscriptions, authorized them to lengthen or shorten it previously as they thought requisite, and desired to have it returned with all expedition; that she might produce it with some other proofs to the commissioners at Westminster, in order to

* Goodall, ii. 315 and 316. The protestation and the covering letter are both in the same hand-writing; which is different from Mary's (Diff. 9), and is, no doubt, that of the Lord Boyd. Only, the letter is subscribed by Mary (Diff. 9). And Dr. Robertson assigns this reason for the letter being only subscribed, and not written also, by Mary; that "she seldom chose to write in the English language" (Diff. 9). The fact is as untrue, as the reason is ridiculous. She appears frequently writing letters in English. She actually appears writing in *English*, to her embassadour in France itself (Keith, pref. vii—viii). And the true reason for her only signing the covering dispatch, was obviously this; that it and the protestation had been written ready for her by Lord Boyd, and that she had nothing more to do, than to sign the one and to send off both.

substantiate the charge which she had brought against Murray and his associates, of being, as they plainly were, the very authors of the murder, that they had the audacity to charge upon her. Murray accordingly expected the protestation to be shewn in London against him, after he was gone for Scotland. He was within five days of his departure, when the paper came into Cecil's hands. He sat down on the 19th of January 1569, to reply to it before it was published. "Because," he says, "the custome of my adversaris is, and has bene, rather to calumpniate and backbite me in my absence, than befoir my face; and that it may happen thame, quhen I am departit furth of this realme, sclanderouslie and untrewlie to report untreuthis of me, and namelie towards sum spechis haldin in my hearing at Craigmillar, in the moneth of November, 1566," about three months before the murder; for this reason he replies to the protestation. He replies to it, as if already sanctioned by the earls. And Cecil, with whom the reply was left, indorses it in form, as "an answer of the Erle of Murray to a wryting of the Erle of Huntly and Argyle."

But in this answer does he with Mr. Hume ask Lord Huntly, why he did not deny his writing and witnessing the contract? Let us see. The accusation from the earls naturally comes first. Yet he plainly replies to this, with all the movements of a detected villain,

With all the forc'd pace of a shuffling nag.

He is bold in denying—*what is not asserted*, concerning

cerning subscriptions and bands. But to the conversation asserted he answers, in the most evasive manner. "In cais ony man will say and affirm, that ever I was present quhen ony purpösis wer haldin at Craigmillar in my audience," nor, as he would have answered if he had been innocent, *such or of such a nature as are stated in the protestation*, but "tending to ony unlauchful or dishonorabill end;" then he denies it. He goes off from the *reality* of the fact asserted against him, and is ready to discuss with the earls the *quality* and *tendency* of it. He does not dare to deny the conversation stated, either in the matter or in the manner. He indeed acknowledges it in effect. And it certainly carries, as Mary thought it would carry, a very damnatory aspect against him. But it carries a ten times more damnatory one, from the authority which he has stamped upon it, by the evasiveness and the frivolousness of his reply. And thus that infamous addition of injury to the imprisonment of Mary, which shews Elizabeth, not merely to have confined her person, but to have also *intercepted her letters*; and that infamous addition of evidence for the conspiracy between Elizabeth and Murray, which proves Elizabeth, not only to have precluded all possibility of Mary's defending herself against Murray's accusations of murder, but to have equally precluded her from *fixing the murder upon Murray*, by intercepting *her formal dispatches for that purpose*; all has now turned out eventually, to the ampler vindication of Mary's innocence, and

to the fuller attestation of Murray's and Elizabeth's guilt.

Murray, however, gives us another reply to the charges in the protestation. This *must* be satisfactory. *He had confessed the whole truth*, he says, *to Elizabeth*; a proper confessor for such a confessional! "I have alreddie declarit to the "Quene's Majestie," he tells us, "the effect "of the haill purposis spokin in my audience at "the samin tyme, sincerely and trewlie, as I "will answer to Almychtie God, unconceiling "ony part to my remembrance, as hir Hienes, "I traist, will report." * The publick is put off with an elusory answer; that however, to the confusion of Murray, tells all which he wants to hide. But Elizabeth is indulged with a full account. The publick was not likely to *scrive* him so gently, as she would. She was selected for this good work, on the same principle that the Jesuits were lately selected by all the popish sovereigns in Europe, from the happy laxity of her sentiments and morals. He could be explicit in his auricular disclosures to her. And she was very ready, no doubt, to administer ghostly comfort to him, and to give him a plenary absolution. Father Gerard and Kitty Cadiere at Thoulon in 1731, easily settled the ritual of their confessions and absolutions together.

This is the whole of his answer. He therefore does not take up Mr. Hume's objection, and expresses his wonder at Huntly's silence concerning

* Goodall, ii. 321—322.

the contract. He knew indeed, though Mr. Hume did not, that Huntly had no other concern in the protestation, than, in concert with the Earl of Argyle, to furnish those particulars of a very remarkable conversation, which constitute the body of it. These must have been furnished to the bishop of Ross, when he was last in Scotland, when he was appointed a commissioner there by the Lords of Mary's party on Sept. 12 1568,* and, consequently, when the contracts had not hitherto made their appearance at all.

Yet still Mr. Hume's question recurs, and is only to be applied to a different person. And "was not this the time," let *me* ask in his name, "for Mary's commissioners, the bishop and Lord Boyd to make Huntly deny his writing [and witnessing] her contract with Bothwell, if that paper had been a forgery?" It certainly was. But still why does not Murray ask the question himself, in his reply before? For this plain reason, because he was aware that Mary and her commissioners knew as little of the contract, the witnessing, or the writing, as Huntly himself. Neither she nor they, at the time, *knew of any thing except the letters*. This is very remarkable. It ought to be particularly noticed, as a circumstance singularly striking, even amidst all the singularities of this strangely conducted accusation. The commissioners of Mary, who from their residence in London, as well as their employment there, were the regular channels of intelligence to her; but who could not convey

* Goodall, ii. 351—353.

what they had never received; were not only precluded from all inspection of the original writings adduced against her, were not only debarred from all copies of them, but did not even hear, either by public report or by secret communication, of these writings being any thing more than the letters. "My maistres," says the very bishop himself, in his often-cited memorial of the 17th of December 1568, "does affirm
 "constantlie, scho never did write ony sic LET-
 "TERIS as are alledgit, but the saymin are forgit
 "and maid expresse be hir adversaries." These he afterwards calls, "the alledgit writingis in
 "form of MISSIVE LETTERIS OR EPISTLES."* But the same bishop, who was the head and hand of the whole commission, did afterwards with a fidelity, a firmness, and a zeal, that must do him great honour in the eyes of an honest and a discerning publick, † print a vindication of his injured mistress in London, at the beginning of the year 1570; and, on its being suppressed by the tyrannous policy of Elizabeth, did afterwards reprint it at Liege in Brabant, with additions and corrections, in 1571. ‡ In this he speaks, just as he spoke in his memorial before. "They pretend," he says, "certaine LET-
 "TERS, that they surmise and would have to have
 "bene written by her Grace, whereby they seeke
 "to inferre against her many a presumption."§

* Goodall, ii. 388 and 389.

† Yet Dr. Robertson pronounces him "a man heated with faction." Diss. 6.

‡ Appendix, No. xii.

§ Defence of Queen Marie's Honour, Anderson, i. 4.

"They

“They say,” he adds, “that they have a sufficient proof to justify the chiefest part of their accusation.—This, this is their joly witnesse.—And soothly this witnesse yet,—what else is it but a blind and deaf, and a domme testimonie of certaine obscure LETTERS?—It is, forsooth, a box of LETTERS taken from one Douglish,—which LETTERS he received at Edenborough of one Sir James Balfoure.”* “Neverthelesse,” he subjoins, “when you have taken your best advantage you can of them, such kinde of LETTERS MISSIVE AND EPISTLES—are not able in any-wise to make a lawful presumption, much lesse any good and substantial proufe, not only against your Sovereigne and Prince, but not so much as against the poorest woman, or simplest wretched creature, in all Scotland.”† “And thinke you now, you most ungrate and unthankful subjectes, that ye maye lawfullye take armes against your mistresse and your most benigne Queene, that ye maye caste her into vile prison, and spoyle her of her crowne, and (whiche is more) of her good and honourable name, fame, and estimation; and then bleare mennes eies, and face the world out, with the shew of these LETTERS, as it were with a card of ten? But yet, say you, they are her LETTERS. She denieth them, and we denie them too.”‡ “Think ye, that wise and expert men are ignorant, how perilous and dangerous a matter it is, to suffer any good proufe upon illation of LETTERS;—but

* P. 15 and 16.

† P. 17 and 18.

‡ P. 18.

“ who conferred these LETTERS, I pray you, with
 “ your Queene’s own hande-writing?—As though
 “ these counterfeit LETTERS, were not the under-
 “ propped postes and upholders of your whole
 “ treachery and usurped kingdome; as though
 “ that many in Scotlande could not expresse, and
 “ resemble, and counterfeit, in their writings, the
 “ Queene’s very character; and as though there
 “ were not among yourselves some singuler ar-
 “ tificer in this handy-craft, and that hath sent
 “ LETTERS also in her very name, as wel into
 “ Englande, as to other places bysides, without
 “ either her commaundement or knowledge.” *

Even so late as the second publication of this spirited address, when the conference at Westminster had been over for years, does the bishop appear totally ignorant of any other hand-writing being produced besides Mary’s, totally ignorant of any other papers except the letters. The sonnets, the contracts, were equally and wholly unknown to him. They were equally unknown also to those two very valuable and intelligent writers, the cotemporary author of Crawford’s memoirs, and the cotemporary composer of Elizabeth’s annals. † And we may therefore rest in the fullest assurance of conviction, that they were also unknown to Mary, Lord Boyd, and the bishop, on the 5th of January 1569, when she sent the protestation to Huntly, which Boyd had written from the bishop’s minutes.

* P. 19 and 20.

† Crawford, 114, mentions only “love-letters and verses,” as presented, and Camden, 17 Transf. 144 Orig. speaks only of “letters and verses,” “epistolas et carmina.”

The contracts and the sonnets then, the very existence of which remained unknown for ever to Mary and to Mary's commissioners, were forged by the rebels in the month of September 1568, more than nine whole months after the forgery of the letters. They were to support the adulterous evidence of the letters in England. The others had been sufficient in Scotland, with the fulminated anathema of the murder of Mary annexed to them. This anathema could operate only in Scotland. Even there, as the Queen was out of the hands of the rebels, it would be merely a *Brutum Fulmen* at present. Murray must therefore contrive some engine of power, to supply its place. In the clear element of England, no terrour of turbulence could operate. His terrour there must be art. And his forged papers must be his formidable weapons. He accordingly increased their number. He drew forth some new arms, from his inexhaustible magazines of artillery. These had never been seen before. Their operation would accordingly be more powerful. They would act upon the fears of Mary, just as the cannons of Europe did upon the Indians, at the first invasion of America.

The rebels thus entered upon a new system of variations. They have been hitherto employed, in retrenching the superfluities of their original evidence, in paring off the dangerous excrescencies, and in reducing the whole into a soberer compass. But we now see them busy, in enlarging their original evidences, in multiplying the

parts that compose it, and in superadding new writings to the old. Nor let this be thought by the hasty briskness of inexperience, an inconsistency in my account of their conduct. It is none. My account is plainly founded upon facts. The inconsistency, therefore, would not be in me, but in them. Yet there is none in either. Their conduct, however varying, was uniformly the same. It flowed from the same source. It was the same current, tending to the same point, and only seeking it by another direction. It was the same principle of conscious and cautious villainy, which I have noticed so often before. This was perpetually sensible of its danger, and apprehensive of a detection. This was for that reason perpetually warding off the one, and guarding against the other. And it necessarily varied its wards, with its sense of the danger; and shifted its guard, with its apprehensions of detection. In their eagerness to criminate Mary at first, the rebels had passed all the lines and limits of discretion. Theirs was very strikingly the

Vaulting ambition, that o'er-leaps itself,
And falls on t'other side.

They soon saw this. They corrected themselves. They new-formed the letters. These had still some reliicks of their original excess about them. They pruned them away with a careful hand. Yet the necessity of contraction had now begun to be counterpoised in their thoughts, with another necessity for enlarging. At this instant both were in the scales. Sometimes the one preponderated, and sometimes the other. They took

took away the subscriptions and directions, in December 1567. They added the contracts and sonnets, in September following. And they tore off the dates, in the November afterwards. So equally mingled in their souls at this period, were the fears of deficiency and the apprehensions of exuberance! So very busy do they now appear, in sometimes turning to those, and in sometimes listening to these! They are reducing the exuberance. They are supplying the deficiency. They are forming sonnets and contracts. They actually present them to the commissioners. Yet they think it prudent afterwards, to conceal all knowledge even of their existence, from Mary's commissioners. And they are once more betraying the villainy, which they are so anxious to conceal; by the different attitudes, in which the ever-restless genius of guilt is thus exhibiting them, to the eyes of the world.

§ IV.

But this principle carried a still greater consequence with it. Not merely sonnets and contracts were subjoined to the original letters. The very LETTERS themselves were VARIED IN THEIR NUMBER. They were in some measure *letters from the moon*. They partook of the qualities of their native planet. They presented different *phases* at different times. And they successively *increased and diminished* in their size.

When they were first produced before the parliament and council in Scotland, they were "DIVERS hir previe lettres." * They were

* Appendix, No. xii.

therefore FOUR or FIVE at least. When they were produced at York, they were actually FIVE. "It appeared—unto us," say the commissioners there, "by two letters of her awne hand, that," &c.* They afterwards form an abstract of, and make extracts from, THREE others. "Imprimis," they say, "after lang discourse of hir conference with the king hir husband in Glasgow, sche wredits to the said Erle," Bothwell, "in thir [these] termes." They then say thus: "Item, in ANE UTHRE LETTRE sent be Betoun," &c. And they add, "Item, in ANE UTHRE LETTRE," &c.† Here therefore are five letters exhibited at York. But the number produced afterwards, and printed since, was and is EIGHT. "We producit," says Murray himself, "Eight letteris—writtin be the Quenis awin hand, and sent to—James sumtime Erle of Bothville."‡ Where then are the other THREE at present? Are they not yet *discovered*? But the letters, in general, have now been discovered fifteen months. The very sonnets and contracts, that were *below* the letters, and there lay hid for so many months, have been recently discovered. And do the three remaining letters lye still lower in the box, *under* the contracts and sonnets; and so escape the notice of the rebels?

If there they are, they still escape it. The conference at Westminster takes place immediately. Murray appears with his contracts, sonnets, and letters. But are his letters only five still? They are still five only. This is clear

* Appendix, No. v.

† Ibid. No. vii.

‡ Ibid. No. xi.
from

from a strict consideration, of what the commissioners and privy counsellors say concerning them. The rebels "produced," say the former, "SEVEN several writings written in *French*,—which "SEVEN writings, being copied, were read in "*French*,—the tenors of all which SEVEN writings "hereafter follow in order, the *first being in manner of a sonnet*." * But of what, besides the sonnet, did these seven writings in French consist? They consisted, says the privy council, of "undry LETTRES, written in *French*,—and therewith also one long *sonnet*, and a *promise of marriage* in the name of the—*Queene* with the "said Erle Bothwell." † These indeed were all that were written in *French*. There could therefore be no more of them. And as the French promise of marriage, and the sonnets, here considered as one sonnet, made two out of the seven writings; the letters must have formed the other five.

FIVE then was the whole number of the present letters, at York and at Westminster. Yet eight were published afterwards. And eight were produced by Murray. But they were not produced at the time. This is plain, from the united testimonies of the privy counsellors and the commissioners. They were therefore produced afterwards. They were produced within nine months afterwards. They even appear from Murray himself, to have been produced before the departure of him and his associates

* Appendix, No. viii. † Ibid. No. ix.

for Scotland. On the 15th of October 1569, Murray delivered some instructions to an embassador whom he sent to Elizabeth, and gave him a general, but large, account of his own proceedings with her commissioners before. He therefore informed him, concerning the papers under Mary's hand, that he *then* "producit eight" "letteris in French, written be the—Quenis awin hand,—Item, a little contract, or obligatioun, "written be the said Quenis awin hand." He strangely forgets the sonnets. But he afterwards adds this observation: "the copies of *all* quhilk "letteris—wer deliverit to Mr. Secretary, in "quhais handis thay remane." And he then subjoins this assertion: "after quhilk probatioun "led, the saidis commissioneris for the Quenis "Majestie of England allowed of our proceid- "ingis;—and hereupon we returnit into Scot- "land." * The three letters behind, were put into the hands of Cecil; before Murray left London, and before the 24th of January 1569.

He was willing to complete his exhibited evidence, previous to his departure. For that reason, he went to search the box once more. He darted his eagle's eyes into the inside of it. He thrust his eagle's talons to the bottom of it. The circumstance of its being the last examination, peculiarly sharpened both. And he fastened upon no less than THREE French letters there, that had hitherto lain unnoticed. These he dragged forth with great eagerness. These he

* Goodall, 11.—87, and 88.

carried to the honest Cecil. He left copies with him. But he brought back the originals. He re-placed them in their snug repository again. The number of the letters in French was at last completed. And they were now produced, just as they were published, eight in all.

By such slow degrees was the written testimony against Mary finally consummated. Nine months are required, to form the constituent parts of a man. But twice nine were necessary, to form the whole of these extraordinary evidences.

Tante molis erat Romanam condere gentem.

But, what is perhaps more wonderful still, there were OTHER LETTERS, that just popped out into the eye of the world, then retired hastily into their cell again, and are for ever invisible now. Their modest merit shrunk back from the light. They were not calculated to stand the broad eye of day. They retired with the spirits of darkness, before the beams of the sun. They took refuge in the shades, from which they had been painfully compelled. There they continued ever afterwards. And the only proof of their existence is, that they are recorded to have once appeared.

One of them is recorded by the commissioners at York. It is thus mentioned. "After the discovery of the murder," they say, "was determined" upon the king, "as it seemed by the sequel; they," the rebels, "inferred upon a LETTER OF HER OWN HAND, that there was another
"meane

" meane of a more cleanly conveyance, devised to
 " kill the King; for there was a quarrel made be-
 " twixt him and the Lord Robert of Holie-roode-
 " house, by carrying of false tales betwixte thame,
 " the Quene being the instrument, as they sayde,
 " to bring it to pass; which purpose, if it had taken
 " effect, as it was very likelie (for the one geving
 " the lye to the other, they were at daggers-draw-
 " inge), it had eased them of the prosecution of
 " the develish fact; which, this taking none ef-
 " fect, was afterwards most tirannously execut-
 " ed."* This letter never made a distinct ap-
 pearance again. Yet it was plainly considered as
 an important one by the rebels, by their dwel-
 ling so much upon it themselves, and by their
 making the commissioners take so much notice
 of it. This also appears from that rebel journal,
 which I have mentioned formerly. There it is dwelt
 upon again. " Feb. 7," it says under, 1566-7,
 " she [Mary] ludged and lay all nycht agane in
 " the fore-said chalmer," the chamber under the
 King's, " and from thence wrayt that same *nycht*
 " THE LETTER, concerning the purpose of the
 " Abbot of Halyruid-house. 8, She confronted
 " the Kyng, and my Lord of Halyruid-house,
 " conform to HIR LETTER wryttin the *nycht* be-
 " foir."† This letter is also mentioned by Paris
 in his second confession; when he says, that the
 Queen " *escrivoit de lettres a Mons. de Boduel,*
 " *et les envoye par le dict Paris au Sieur de*
 " *Boduel, environ l'onze ou douze heures de nuit.*"‡

* Appendix, No. v. † Ibid. No. x. ‡ Goodall, ii. 80.

So important was the letter in the eyes of the rebels, as to be insisted upon very particularly. It has a much honour paid to it in the journal, as the letters from Stirling. It has more honour paid it by the commissioners, than they. And yet, after all, it has now disappeared for ever. This gives us one instance more, and within a very short compass too, of a striking variation in the rebel evidence against Mary. But what was the reason of their conduct in this instance? They found some absurdity in it, no doubt, of which it may be impossible for us to judge, as we have not a copy of the letter; and of which it might be equally impossible perhaps, if we had. Yet fortunately we can see the reason, though we have not the copy. That letter was fabricated upon the ORIGINAL PLAN of the letters. It was fabricated, when the MURDER OF THE KING was yet to be the object of them. This appears from the account given of it at York. "They inferred
 " upon a letter of her own hand, that there was
 " *another* meane devised to *kill the King*—, which
 " purpose, if it had taken effect,—had *eased* them
 " of" the murder by powder. And the journal concurs with this. "Feb. 5," it says, "she," Mary, "ludged all nycht under the King, in the
 " *chalmer quhairin the powder was layd thairefter*;
 " —Feb. 9, She and Bothwell—past up—to the
 " King's chalmer, and thair thay remaynit che-
 " rissing him, quhill Bothwell and his complices
 " hayd putt all thingis to ordour, and Paris, hir
 " chalmer-child, *bayd ressavit in hir chalmer the*
 " *powder.*

“*poulder*.”* Both shew the letter to have been framed, as one of a series, for fixing the murder of the King directly upon Mary. And it was, therefore, what we may call ONE OF THE ORIGINAL LETTERS.

That the rebels should have so far departed from their own grand variation, by which they changed the scope and design of the letters from murder to adultery, as to produce a letter concerning the murder; is very amazing. But it shews us the tremulous and desultory nature of guilt, very strongly. “*Animus impurus, Diis hominibusque infestus, neque vigiliis neque quietibus sedari poterat; ita conscientia mentem excitam vastabat; igitur—citius modo, modo tardus incessus; prorsus in facie vultuque vecordia inerat.*” Such is the general character of *conduct*, in the Catilines and the Murraies of all ages! We have seen the same sort of behaviour in them, before. We have particularly seen them, reverting to the point of murder in their charges, when they had previously gone off to adultery in their evidences. And we have additionally seen them, deliver—in this journal with the letter; when the letters were now altered substantially, and when the journal was constructed for them as they stood before. * “*Prorsus in facie vultuque vecordia inerat.*”

* But this is not the only letter, that, like a meteor, shoots suddenly across the eye, and then is lost for ever. We have others. Some, like the

* Appendix, No. x.

former, draw a train of light after them, by which they shew themselves very distinctly, before they vanish away. Another just kindles, is seen, and dies. This is equally, though not in an equal degree, noticed with the former in the journal. Tracing the Queen's motions from Edinborough to Glasgow, and from Glasgow back to Edinborough again, with a view to the formation of the letters; the journal says thus: "Jan. 29, She remained all day in Linlythquow with the King, and WRAYTT FROM THENCE TO BOTHWELL." At this time and from this place, therefore, was one of the letters dated, which the rebels had previously designed to produce. It was, equally with the former, one in the series of *murderous* evidence. It was what we may call, ANOTHER OF THE ORIGINAL LETTERS.

When Lethington sat down to compose the letters for Mary, he naturally began to compose upon his previous ideas concerning them. He meant to prove the murder only. He therefore took his station, near to the time of the murder. He wrote a letter for her from Holyrood-house, three days only before the murder. He wrote another from Linlithgow, thirteen days before it. And so far he obviously pursued the line of his original plan. But he actually pursued it still farther. He wrote some letters from her, antecedent to both, from Glasgow. All these went on in a series of *murderous* evidence, from the

* Appendix, No. x.

21st of January, when she set out to fetch the King from Glasgow, to the 10th of February, when the King was murdered. He thus formed an edition of the letters, which I have not noticed before; the first actual impression of them. And all were addressed, probably, to some confidante of her own sex. But, when he had thus drawn out his previous ideas upon paper, he saw the necessity for altering his plan. He must make the adultery the harbinger to the murder. He must change the female confidante into the adulterous Earl. He must have a new series of letters to him, for the seizure in April following. He instantly did all this. He added the new letters. He interpolated, he reformed the old; to make them serve still. The time was pressing. And in his hurry he neglected to alter a circumstance, which I have noticed before in the first letter, and which shews to this day, that the letter was originally addressed, *not* to Bothwell, *but* to some other person; because it speaks of Bothwell AS A THIRD PERSON. "Remember zow," it says with infinite absurdity to *Bothwell* at present, "of the purpois of the Lady Reres, of the "Inglistmen, of his mother, of the Erle of Argyle, "OF THE ERLE OF BOTHWELL."* Bothwell is here spoken of, as equally a third person with "Argyle;" and as equally distinct from the person addressed, with "his mother," with "the "Inglistmen," or with "Lady Reres." But no set of ideas, *at the time*, could have generated this

* See Vol. 2d, Lett. i. Sect. xxxvi.

gross absurdity. It could have arisen only from the collision of one set against another, a posterior coming over a prior, and the master of both not taking sufficient care to reconcile them together. And thus we have a new series of letters, that interpose between the letters delineated on the mind, and realized by the pen, of Lethington at first, and the letters produced to the public afterwards; an intermediate set, that partook of the ideas of both; that insisted upon the adultery, and that yet adhered to the murder.

But there are *several* of these meteorous letters, that appear, like the beams of the Aurora Borealis, all converging to a point, in the conference at Westminster. On the 8th of December, the day of the grand exhibition, the journal of the commissioners speaks thus. "This daye," it tells us, "the Erle of Murray, according to the appoyntment yesterday, came to the Quene's Majestie's cominissioners, saying, that, as they had *yesternight* produced and shewed SUNDRY WRITINGS, tending to prove the hatred which the Quene of Scots bare towards her husband to the tyme of his murder; wherin also they said might appear speciall arguments of her inordinate love towards the Erle Bothwell: so, for the further satisfaction both of the Quene's Majestie and theyr lordships, they were ready to produce and shew a great number of *other LETTERS wrytten by the said Quene*, wherin, as they said, might appear very evidently her inordinate love towards the said Erle Bothwell, with sundry other arguments of her guiltynes

“ of the murder of her husband. And so ther-
 “ upon they produced seven several wrytings
 “ wrytten in French IN THE LYKE Romain HAND,
 “ as OTHERS her LETTERS which were SHEWED
 “ YESTERNIGHT, and AVOWED BY THEM TO BE
 “ WRYTTEN BY THE SAID QUENE.—The tenors
 “ of all which seven wrytings hereafter follow in
 “ order.”* In this curious and useful passage,
 we see a set of letters apparently different from
 the famous eight. *They* were produced on the
 7th of December, but *these* on the 8th. *They*
 were equally with *these* avowed by their producers,
 to be Mary’s writing. *They* were equally in a
 hand like hers. *They* equally betrayed her vio-
 lent regard for Bothwell. But *they* managed the
 regard in a different manner. In *these* the attach-
 ment to Bothwell is the primary object; while
 in *them* it was only a secondary. *These* were to
 shew “ her inordinate love towards the—Erle
 “ Bothwell, *with* fundry other arguments of her
 “ guiltyness of the murder of her husband;” and
they “ to prove the hatred which the Quene of
 “ Scotts bare towards her husband—, *wherin*
 “ *also* they said might appear speciall arguments
 “ of her inordinate love.” In *these* that love is
 only made one “ with fundry *other arguments*,”
 of her concern in the murder. In *them* was shewn
 “ the hatred which the Quene of Scotts bare
 “ toward her husband, TO THE TYME OF HIS
 “ MURDER.” *They* therefore carried on the *mur-*
derous part of the correspondence, to a later day

* Appendix, No. viii.

than the eight do; even as late as the letters from Linlithgow and from Kirk-a-field before. Yet *they* cannot be THE ORIGINAL LETTERS of Throgmorton. Throgmorton's originals were merely ideal at first, and, when real, could have nothing of adulterous regard for Bothwell in them. But they are all that SECONDARY SET OF ORIGINALS, which I have just noticed to have been made, after Throgmorton's and before the present; the intermediate work in the process of transmutation. They are not Throgmorton's. That is plain. They are not the present. That is still plainer. And yet they approach much nearer in nature and quality to them, than to his.

Here then is an amazing discovery from all. Here is a set of new jewels found in this casket of Mary's, nearly the same in number and in value, with all that we have seen before. So richly stored was it with diamonds of different waters! Of the best were the famous eight. Of the next best were these new-discovered gems. And of the worst were the sonnets and contracts. But why were these letters, that are so much superiour to the contracts and sonnets, and so nearly alike to the famous eight, not brought forward with a confidence more suitable to their merit? Why do they walk as pages, when they might rank as lords? Why are they adduced to substantiate the handwriting of the eight, when they ought to have advanced with their own? And why are they ordered to do that, when they could not substantiate *their* handwriting, any more than their own? For this reason. In the gradations of re-

finement upon the original plan, these letters had superseded the letters of Throgmorton, and been superseded by the eight. Yet they were so similar to the eight, that they were preserved when they were superseded. They were kept for the purpose of co-operating with the eight, in pointing forcibly *their* charge of adultery and *their* surmise of murder against Mary, and in proving ostensibly *their* handwriting to be hers. They were produced as equal witnesses with the eight, to her inordinate love for Bothwell, and to her hatred of her husband. But then this was only an inferior view in them. The grand aim was, to support what so much wanted support, to ensure the credibility of the eight. In the collusive management of the principal actors among the commissioners, some form of collation was to be gone through, and some papers were to be furnished for the purpose. The papers, however, must necessarily be apochryphal. No other would do. The rebels were accordingly to furnish them. And they furnished these. Yet, since these had been superseded by the eight, they were not proper to be left with them, as standing witnesses against Mary. The whole weight of the evidences against her, must rest finally on the eight themselves. Of *these*, therefore, copies were left with the commissioners. Of *those*, not a copy, not a scrip of a copy, remained behind, when the collation was over. They were not calculated for consideration, along with the others. They would have been found to clash with

with them. And they were therefore withdrawn wholly and for ever.

All this serves pointedly to shew, with what an uncertain step, and with what an embarrassed countenance, the rebels advanced to produce their forged evidences. It serves peculiarly to point out to our observation, an EDITION of the letters, of which we were totally ignorant before. We see that edition, and the present, very strikingly discriminated from each other, by being brought so closely together. And we see them additionally discriminated, by the very *number* of their letters. *This* has eight, and *that* had TEN. The number appears from Murray's and Morton's enumeration of the contents of the capacious box, in their respective receipts concerning it. Murray owns to have received, with the box, "all
" missive letteris, contractis or obligatiounis for
" mariage, sonettis or luif-ballettis, and ALL
" UTHERIS LETTERIS contenit theirin."* This is dated the 16th of September 1568, just before the conference at York. And from it there appears to have been in the box, even *then*, a series of writings "send and past betwix the Quene—
" and—Erll Bothvile," *besides* the sonnets, the contracts, and the eight letters. This series is said by the commissioners at Westminster, to have consisted of "sundry writings," that were equally with the eight in form of "letters," and that, like them, were calculated to prove Mary's hatred of her husband, and Mary's love for Bothwell.

* Appendix, No. iv.

But they are noticed more minutely in Morton's receipt, the 22d of January 1571. Particularizing, as Murray's does, "the missive letteris, contractis or obligatiounis for marriage, sonettis " or luif-ballettis ;" it wraps up the general account in these words, " and," *not*, as Murray says, *all*, but, "UTHERIS LETTERIS THAIRIN CON-
" TENIT, TO THE NUMBER OF xxi."* It thus gives us the exact detail of the " other letters." And the well-known epistles being eight, the contracts two, and the sonnets one, the remaining TEN must be the amount of the others. Of these, as I have already observed, the letter from Kirk-a-field was one. This was produced at the conference in York. And, immediately before that conference, we see a number of letters in the box, very different from the eight, and yet as ready to be produced as they. The letter from Linlithgow was also another, as I have equally observed before. It carries an immediate relation to that from Kirk-a-field. It is the point in the scale of evidence, immediately antecedent to it, and connecting it and the Glasgow epistles together. And hence, as I have also observed, the letters produced at Westminster the night before the grand exhibition, are said " to prove the hatred which " the Queen of Scotts bare toward her husband, " TO THE TIME OF THE MURDER ;" one of them bringing it down within THIRTEEN days of the murder, and the other within THREE. The rest must have been from Glasgow and from Stirling ;

* Appendix, No. iv.

that series of letters, as the rebel journal witnesses, having some from both, like the eight. But then this shews us a great variation in the rebel conduct, with respect to the journal itself. Constructed originally for the prior series of letters, it was never altered afterwards for the posteriour one. And it now, very contradictorily, embraces both together.

But let me urge this point concerning the journal still further.—When the ten letters were framed at first, they were very similar to the eight, in *the circumstances related by them*. This may be shewn satisfactorily, by a comparison between the journal and one of the eight, in a single point. In the former are these words: “Jan. 27, the Quene (*conforme to hir commission*, AS SHE “WRYTTIS) brought the King from Glasgow to “the KALENDAR towards Edynbrough; Jan. 28, “the Quene brought the King to LINLYTHQUOW “—; 29, she remayned all day in LINLYTH- “QUOW with the King, and *wraytt from thence to* “*Bothwell*; 30, the Quene brought the King to “EDYNBROUGH, and patt him in HIS LUDGING “QUHAIR HE ENDIT.”* But the passage referred to in the letters, is now found in the second of the eight, and runs thus: “*According to my commis-* “*sioun*, I bring the man with me to CRAIGMILLAR “on MONOUNDAY, *qubair* he WILL BE ALL WED- “NISDAY; and I will gang to EDINBURGH, to “draw blude of me.”† This is very plainly the passage alluded to by the journal. Yet there is

* Appendix, No. x.

† L. ii, S. 2. in vol. 2d.

a strange opposition between them. The journal carries the Queen on Monday Jan. 27th, to Kalendar-House near Falkirk, a seat of Lord Livingstone's; on Tuesday Jan. 28, conducts her to Linlithgow; and, on Thursday the 30th, brings her to Edinburgh and Kirk-a-field. But the second of the eight, which has the connecting words in it at present, acts so differently from this; as to carry the Queen from Glasgow to the neighbourhood of Edinburgh on Monday, at once; to lodge her at Craigmillar, two miles from it, instead of Kirk-a-field at it; and to keep her there till Thursday; when it agrees with the journal to conduct her to Edinburgh, seemingly leaving the king at Craigmillar still, but really taking him with her, no doubt, agreeably to the journal. This, as to the main substance of it, is obviously in a direct and violent contradiction to the journal. Nor can the contradiction be palliated at all. The same words occur in the same letter, as described by the commissioners at York, from their own inspection of it. "In ane uther lettre sent be Betoun," they say, are these words: "According to my commission, I bring the man with me to CRAIGMILLAR upon Munday, quhair he will be all Wednesday, and I will gang to Edinburt to draw bluid of me."* Indeed the contradiction in the letter to the journal, results from an essential difference between them, and a difference that is in the very plan and purpose of both. In the second letter, the

* Appendix, No. vii.

Queen delineates her intended route for Craigmillar on the Monday following, intimates her intended stay at Craigmillar on Tuesday and Wednesday, and notes her intended departure from Craigmillar to Edinburgh on Thursday. And in the *very first* letter she is represented, as telling the king her design of carrying him to Craigmillar; and he is represented, as agreeing to it. "I answerit," she says, "that I wald tak him with me to CRAIGMILLAR, quhair the mediciner and I micht help him, and not be far from my sone. He answerit, that he was reddy when I pleisit." She also says in another part of the same letter, that the king "suld tak me—dicine and the bath at CRAIGMILLAR."* Here then is an amazing circumstance. Here are two sorts of letters, relating the same design of the Queen's about leaving Glasgow, relating it precisely with the same reference to her commission, and yet giving it a direction totally different. The truth is, that the route and the time of the journal were calculated for the ten letters only. This is clear from the mention of one letter in the journal, that she sent to Bothwell on Wednesday from Linlithgow; when by the present letters she was actually at Craigmillar, and had been there ever since Monday night. The route and the time of the ten, were substantially altered from what they appear in the journal, to what they are in the eight; when the former were superseded by the latter. Yet, as we have equally

* L. i. S. xii. and xxviii.

seen in other points before, the journal was forgotten to be altered, though the letters were. And, what is still more, the two sets of letters, that were successively produced on the 7th and 8th days of December 1568, appear, in *some* of their letters, to have been *both* directed to Bothwell AT THE SAME TIME and FROM THE SAME PLACE, and so to have clearly convicted each other of forgery; appear also to have related THE VERY SAME CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE VERY SAME WORDS, and so to have convicted each other of forgery again; appear also to have marked THE SAME TIME for the Queen's leaving Glasgow, but to have carried her from it BY A DIFFERENT WAY, to have brought her TO A DIFFERENT PLACE, and to have kept her AT DIFFERENT PLACES ON THE VERY SAME DAYS, and so to have convicted each other of forgery a third time.

I dwell the more circumstantially upon these points, because a new variation arises at almost every advance, and each unites with each to form so many proofs of the general forgery. Wherever we turn our steps, we find ourselves disappointed in our expectations. The ground is nowhere solid. It sinks under us, and betrays us. The scene before us, also, is perpetually shifting as we approach, and mocking us. We are walking in fairy land. We are looking at fairy visions. And we are convinced on every trial, that all is magick and delusion around us. But I wish to contemplate one part of this magical exhibition, before it is entirely withdrawn from the eye, with a little more particularity.

The